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The President's Daily Brief

4 October 1971

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Top Secret

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The South Vietnamese election went fairly smoothly with a high voter turnout. *(Page 1)*

Chou En-lai and other Chinese civilian politburo members are maintaining an active schedule of appearances, but several top military leaders remain out of public view. *(Page 2)*

The two German states remain divided over who is competent to speak for Berlin in the negotiations to implement the Four-Power agreement. *(Page 4)*

Lon Nol has now decided to extend the mandate of the Cambodian National Assembly. *(Page 5)*

East Pakistani leader Mujibur Rahman is said to have been given a life sentence by a Pakistani military tribunal. *(Page 5)*

A meeting of the new Arab federation may help resolve some of the mystery about the status of Libyan Prime Minister Qadhafi. *(Page 5)*

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SOUTH VIETNAM

The government is reporting that 87.7 percent of the country's registered voters went to the polls and that Thieu received approximately 91 percent of the ballots cast.

> *The voter turnout, if true, is more than the 83.7 percent for the 1967 presidential contest; it seems particularly high in view of the calls by Ky, the An Quang Buddhists, and other opposition elements for a boycott.*

Efforts by the Communists and by radical student and veterans groups to disrupt the election process were generally ineffective. Communist military attacks were widespread, but mostly small-scale. The Communists relied largely on stepped up shellings, which included light rocket attacks on Saigon and several other cities and military bases. Although students and veterans managed to stir up serious disturbances in Da Nang, and apparently were responsible for scattered terrorist incidents in Saigon, most of the country remained quiet.

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COMMUNIST CHINA

Since the curtailed National Day celebrations on 1 October, Chou En-lai has hosted a series of state receptions and dinners featuring a heavy turnout among the active civilian members of the ruling politburo below the level of Mao and Lin Piao.

These efforts are clearly designed to reduce foreign speculation about the leadership situation following the abrupt cancellation of Chou's banquet on the eve of National Day and the failure of the regime to publish the traditional editorial statement marking the occasion.

The continued failure of army Chief of Staff Huang Yung-sheng and the top leaders of the navy and air force to appear in public suggests that the current power struggle concerns in part the political futures of China's top ranking military leaders.

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Li Hsueh-feng, who is a veteran party official and an alternate member of the politburo, was conspicuously excluded from a special pictorial article on the politburo released last summer.

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We have no evidence that a replacement has been named for either man in the politically sensitive Peking Military Region, which may mean that the question has been hotly debated within the leadership.

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There is also uncertainty concerning Hsu Shih-yu, an important regional military figure in east China. Hsu has been out of sight since 6 June and a recent provincial broadcast suggests that another man has taken over his post as commander of the Nanking Military Region. Any personnel change of this magnitude is almost certainly a reflection of the currently unsettled leadership situation in Peking.

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EAST - WEST GERMANY

Following his meeting with East German negotiator Kohl on Friday, West German negotiator Bahr told the press that Pankow's willingness to let Bonn represent West Berlin in the postal agreement signed on 30 September could serve as a model for an agreement on all transit between West Germany and West Berlin. Kohl, however, had earlier made it quite clear that Pankow had not budged from the view that Bahr was competent to discuss only transit of West German civilians and goods, while the West Berlin Senat would have to negotiate separate arrangements for transit of West Berlin residents and goods.

The two negotiators have therefore agreed to postpone resolution of this thorny issue until discussions are near completion. In the meantime, beginning Wednesday the tempo of the talks will be speeded up, with three sessions scheduled per week, and both delegations have been expanded to include more technical experts.

The parallel inner-Berlin talks are scheduled to resume today.

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NOTES

Cambodia: [redacted] 50X1

[redacted] 50X1

Pakistan: Imprisoned East Pakistani leader Mujibur Rahman has been sentenced to life imprisonment by the military tribunal which has been trying him since mid-August on treason charges [redacted] A verdict of either death or life imprisonment had been expected. The next step presumably will be up to President Yahya Khan who will review the sentence. He may let it stand because he has publicly accused Mujib of traitorous activities. On the other hand, Yahya, aware that the popular Bengali leader is generally considered the keystone of any political settlement between East and West Pakistan, could decide to commute the sentence in the interest of working toward an agreement. 50X1 50X1

Federation of Arab Republics: Some of the mystery about the status of Libyan Prime Minister Qadhafi may be resolved today when the Libyan, Egyptian, and Syrian heads of state begin a three-day meeting in Cairo. Qadhafi has been absent from public view since 19 September and there has been intense speculation that he has resigned his top leadership posts. So far, preparations have been going ahead as if Qadhafi will attend. The meeting of the three is the initial session of the presidential council of the new Federation of Arab Republics. The agenda lists a large number of topics related to organization of the federation, but the authoritative Egyptian newspaper, al-Ahram, has predicted the discussions will also range over political and military developments in the Arab world.

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